

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 /088 W

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R 081735Z MAR 76

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 698

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 1794

AMCONGEN MILAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EEC, IT

SUBJECT: EC COMMISSION PRESIDENT ORTOLI'S REACTIONS TO HIS CORRIERE
DELLA SERA "INTERVIEW" ON ITALY, PCI AND EC

1. IN SEPTEL MISSION TRANSMITS EXCERPTS FROM A "CONVERSATION"
BETWEEN EC COMMISSION PRESIDENT ORTOLI AND CORRIERE DELLA
SERA CORRESPONDENT ARTURO GUATELLI (MARCH 1 EDITION OF
CORRIERE). ARTICLE STRUCK US AS CONTAINING SOME RATHER
FORTHRIGHT COMMENTARY BY ORTOLI POINT UP SOME (IF NOT ALL)
OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH MIGHT ARISE IN EC IF PCI ENTERED
ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.

2. DURING RECENT COURTESY CALL, AMBASSADOR HINTON ASKED
EC COMMISSIONER SCARASCIA-MUGNOZZA, ONE OF TWO ITALIAN
COMMISSIONERS, FOR HIS REACTIONS. SCARASCIA REPORTED THAT
ARTICLE STEMMED FROM OFF-THE-RECORD LUNCH WITH A NUMBER
OF BRUSSELS-BASED CORRESPONDENTS AND THAT ORTOLI WAS EM-
BARRASSED BY VIOLATION OF CONFIDENCE BY GUATELLI, WHO WAS
ONLY REPORTER PRESENT TO BREAK THE RULES. ACCORDING

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TO SCARASCIA, ORTOLI WAS UPSET PRIMARILY BECAUSE HE

FEARED THAT HIS COMMENTS MIGHT BE MISINTERPRETED
AS ENDORSEMENT OF PCI PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT
AND THEREFORE SERVE AS GRIST FOR THE PCI'S MILL.

3. COMMENT: "INTERVIEW" DOES INCLUDE SOME CRITICAL
COMMENTS ON ITALIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, ROLE OF
CHURCH, AND, AT LEAST IMPLICITLY, OF DC (THOSE
SECTIONS WERE NOT EXCERPTED IN SEPTTEL). WE CAN
ALSO UNDERSTAND ORTOLI'S SENSITIVITY TO POSSIBLE
CHARGES OF SPEAKING OUT OF TURN ABOUT INTERNAL
AFFAIRS OF MEMBER STATES. ON THE OTHER HAND WE
DOUBT IF PCI COULD DRAW MUCH COMFORT FROM COMMENTS
TO EFFECT THAT PCI'S "CONVERSATION" IS NO SURE THING
AND THAT PCI ENTRY IN GOVERNMENT WOULD CREATE SOME
CRITICAL PROBLEMS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE EC. ON
BALANCE, ORTOLI'S VIEWS STRIKE US AS HELPFUL. HINTON

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